



The Old Ironsides Report



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Mansoor takes over 'Ready First' brigade

Story, photos by Spc. Christopher Stanis, 1AD PAO

BAGHDAD, Iraq – It proved to be a unique change of command ceremony for 1st Armored Division's 1st Brigade Combat Team when Col. Michael Tucker relinquished the brigade colors to Col. Peter Mansoor in front of Baghdad's Martyr's Monument Tuesday.

"I could not ask to hand the reins of Ready First over to a greater officer than Col. Pete Mansoor," Tucker said. "Pete comes to this posting with all the right skill sets and experience."

Maj. Gen. Fred Robinson Jr., 1AD commanding general, said that under Tucker, 1st Brigade remained trained and ready for missions set before them, including Operation Iraqi Freedom.

"Two years ago, Col. Tucker laid out a vision for the 1st BCT that addressed the fundamental components that have led to this success," Robinson said.

Tucker is moving on to be the executive officer for the commanding general of U.S. Army Europe.

As for new brigade's new commander, Robinson said he has no doubt that Mansoor will lead 1st Brigade to victory.

"I know the Mansoors are excited to be a part of the Ready First family and will dedicate themselves to serving the soldiers and families of the brigade," Robinson said.

Mansoor said the brigade would continue to defend the nation.

"Since the fall of the Berlin Wall in 1989, American soldiers have overthrown oppressive regimes in Panama, Haiti, the Balkans, Afghanistan and most recently Iraq," he said. "Soldiers of the Ready First Combat Team, you stand at freedom's epicenter here in Baghdad, and I am honored to join your ranks today."

Mansoor holds a Bachelor of Science degree from the United States Military Academy, a master's in strategic studies from the Army War College and a master's and doctorate in military history from Ohio State University.

He is also a graduate of the armor officers basic and advanced courses, the Combined Arms and Services Staff School and the General Staff College.



Incoming 1st Brigade Combat Team commander, Col. Peter Mansoor, receives the brigade colors from Maj. Gen. Fred Robinson Jr., 1st Armored Division commander, during a change of command ceremony at Martyr's Monument at Baghdad, Iraq.

Mansoor's prior assignments include service in the 3rd Armored Cavalry Regiment, professor of military history at the United States Military Academy, 11th Armored Cavalry Regiment, 10th Cavalry and 4th Infantry Division.

His awards and decorations include the Legion of Merit, Defense Meritorious Service Medal, Meritorious Service Medal with two oak leaf clusters, Joint Service Commendation Medal, Army Commendation Medal with two oak leaf clusters, Army Achievement Medal with four oak leaf clusters National Defense Service Medal with star, Armed Forces Expeditionary Medal, Joint Meritorious Unit Award with oak leaf cluster and parachutist badge.



NEWS

Bush Celebrates With Troops for Fourth

WASHINGTON (AP) - President Bush celebrates the Fourth of July by mixing a patriotic tribute to the troops and their role in protecting freedom with recognition of the centennial of flight in the hometown of airplane inventors Orville and Wilbur Wright.

The president's visit to Dayton, Ohio, on Friday was to be his 10th trip this year to a key battleground state that will be crucial in the 2004 elections.

Palestinians Protest Gaza Arrests

GAZA CITY, Gaza Strip (AP) - Palestinian security forces arrested militiamen accused of violating a truce with Israel, the first such arrests under a U.S.-backed peace plan, prompting a protest by gunmen, who marched in the street and fired volleys into the air.

Seven militiamen were arrested in Gaza City and the town of Khan Younis, apparently for firing anti-tank rockets at the Jewish settlement of Kfar Darom on Wednesday. The rocket fire injured four people.

32 Die in Mosque Explosion in Pakistan

QUETTA, Pakistan (AP) - An explosion shattered a Shiite Muslim mosque in an attack Friday that killed at least 32 worshippers during Muslim prayers, officials said. Angry Shiites rioted in the streets of this southwestern city, burning cars and tires. Another 52 people were wounded, Interior Ministry spokesman Iftikar Ahmed told The Associated Press.

Chaplain's thought for the day:

When one door of happiness closes, another opens; but often we look so long at the closed door that we do not see the one which has been opened for us.

--Helen Keller

In the game of musical chairs, everyone walks around a circle of chairs. When the music stops, they scramble for the nearest open chair. If we were playing this game and found the nearest chairs taken, wouldn't we quickly look around for the next open one? To remain immobilized, angry that the chair we wanted was taken, would undoubtedly lose our place in the game.

Sometimes in life, we set our sights on a particular chair. Perhaps there is an award we want to win, or position we would like to get. When we do not get what we want, it is easy to keep looking at what we didn't get instead of seeing all we have.

It is important to be grateful for what we have--for the open doors and empty chairs waiting and inviting our attention. Loss and disappointment are a part of life--but the music will play again and our lives can move on.

What is available to me today?

SPORTS

Federer, Philippoussis Win at Wimbledon

WIMBLEDON, England (AP) - With a superior serve and better all-around game, Roger Federer beat Andy Roddick 7-6 (6), 6-3, 6-3 in the Wimbledon semifinals Friday. The match up between young players touted as future Grand Slam champions turned out to be a mismatch. Federer controlled the net, employed more variety of shots and - surprisingly - hit 17 aces to just four for Roddick.

And, in other news...

Barry White dead at 58

R&B singer Barry White, known for his deep seductive voice on such sultry hits as Can't Get Enough Of your Love, Babe has died. He was 58.

ARNIE VISITS TROOPS IN IRAQ

(SKY) Movie hardman Arnold Schwarzenegger has given US troops in Iraq a screening of his latest film Terminator 3: Rise of the Machines.

Schwarzenegger spoke to a crowd of soldiers in one of Saddam Hussein's former presidential palaces inside the Baghdad airport compound.

"It is really wild driving around here, I mean the poverty, and you see there is no money, it is disastrous financially and there is the leadership vacuum, pretty much like in California right now," he joked.

The 55-year-old has indicated he may run for governor of California as a Republican if residents there vote to recall the current governor, Gray Davis.

"I play terminator, but you guys are the true terminators," he told the soldiers, before heading to the base at Balad that came under attack.



TODAY'S WEATHER

High: 112F

Low: 83F

